

LEGISLATIVE BILL 49

Approved by the Governor August 15, 2002

Introduced by Appropriations Committee: Wehrbein, 2, Chairperson;
Beutler, 28; Bourne, 8; Cudaback, 36; Engel, 17; Foley, 29;
Kruse, 13; D. Pederson, 42; Thompson, 14

AN ACT relating to the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; to amend section 71-4728.04, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2001; to change duties related to the telehealth system; to repeal the original section; and to declare an emergency.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 71-4728.04, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2001, is amended to read:

71-4728.04. (1) The commission ~~shall~~ may establish a telehealth system to provide access for deaf and hard of hearing persons in remote locations to mental health, alcoholism, and drug abuse services. The telehealth system ~~shall~~ may (a) provide access for deaf or hard of hearing persons to counselors who communicate in sign language and are knowledgeable in deafness and hearing loss issues, (b) promote access for hard of hearing persons through contacts with counselors in which hard of hearing persons receive both visual cues, or reading lips, and auditory cues, (c) offer remote interpreter services for deaf or hard of hearing persons to interact with counselors who are not fluent in sign language, and (d) promote participation in educational programs.

(2) The commission shall set and charge a fee between the range of twenty and one hundred fifty dollars per hour for the use of the telehealth system. The commission shall remit all fees collected pursuant to this section to the State Treasurer for credit to the Telehealth System Fund.

(3) For purposes of this section, telehealth has the same meaning as in section 71-8503.

Sec. 2. Original section 71-4728.04, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2001, is repealed.

Sec. 3. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.